

ENGLISH MUFFIN BAGEL

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

10 This invention relates to bakery specialties, and in particular relates to a specialty bun which is configured like a standard bagel, which has the nook-and-cranny texture of the standard English muffin, which is intermediate in chewability between the standard English muffin and the standard bagel, and which toasts and tastes very like a standard English muffin.

2. Description of the Related Art

Standard bagels and standard English muffins are well known bakery specialties of yeast-risen flour.

20 The standard bagel is toroidal in shape like a doughnut, is smooth in texture with a tough, smooth crust and with very smooth but very chewy interior, and has a sweetish taste. Boiling in (usually sugared) water is an intermediate step prior to baking a standard bagel. The standard bagel is very tough, and is probably the most dangerous of breakfast foods -- many people have cut themselves seriously while trying to slice the standard bagel into halves, while holding the standard bagel upright like a wheel. Once halved, the standard bagel bottom is typically spread with cream cheese and capped with the standard bagel top half, then eaten out of hand.

Standard bagels, when commercially made, are let to rise for a very short time before and while being formed into raw bagels, typically by a bagel-forming machine. Rise time is known commercially as "proofing;" total rise time is typically divided into a short first proofing and a longer second proofing. The raw bagels are immediately placed onto plywood trays called "boards," usually two dozen at a time, and let to rise for an intermediate duration second proofing in tall rolling racks. After the second proofing step, the still-raw bagels are stored and cooled for an indeterminate time in a walk-in cooler called a "retarder." When it is desired to bake a batch, the raw bagels, usually a two-

10 dozen board at a time, are slid from the board into a vat of boiling water for a 45-second to one-minute treatment. Separated after boiling, the still-raw standard bagels, with surfaces still damp and hot, are placed separately, not touching, on narrow, thick burlap-covered wooden 2x4 planks, each holding five or six bagels, which do not touch each other. The bagels are then transferred, burlap-covered wooden 2x4 planks and all, into the oven, which is preheated. Each burlap-covered 2 x 4 wooden plank rests on a heavy metal deck, within the oven. The burlap-covered wooden 2x4 plank insulates its five or six bagels from the griddle effect of the hot heavy metal deck. Note that in some jurisdictions the burlap-covered 2 x 4 wooden plank is replaced by a metal-mesh standoff plank, a

20 sort of four-legged tray. In either case, the function of the burlap-covered 2 x 4 wooden plank or the metal standoff plank is to provide isolation of the bagels from the hot, heavy, metal plank. The bagels, still wet from the boiling step, begin to bake, but without browning the base of each bagel and without sticking to the deck. The heavy, metal deck, one of several within the oven, moves in an oval pattern within the oven, keeping its horizontal surface horizontal as it makes a circuit of the oven. This configuration allows the oven to accommodate more decks, presenting each deck in sequence to a convenient-height door. After one

or more circuits, depending on the size of the oven, the baker grabs the burlap-covered 2 x 4 wooden plank, flips the partially baked standard bagels upside-down onto the hot, heavy metal deck, and removes the burlap-covered 2 x 4 wooden plank. The standard bagels are then griddle-baked on the deck for a circuit or more, until lightly browned and done (deck-baked). A small number of baked bagels is then picked up by the baker, using a large, flat, shovel-like device called a "peel." Each traditional bagel has a smooth skin rounding to a small flat where the bagel sat on the deck, and has a central hole which is also rounded.

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A standard bagel, to be perfect, is kept separate from its fellow bagels during all times of proofing and baking, and does not have kiss marks where adjacent bagels touch.

The standard English muffin is puck-shaped with flat top and bottom which form a dry crust thinly coated with cornmeal, is very porous in texture, and is much less chewy than the bagel. Standard English muffin preparation involves significant rising with a generous portion of yeast, and involves baking, with frequent turns or the mechanized equivalent, on a very hot greased griddle. The standard English muffin is typically fork-split to preserve the rough texture, toasted, spread with butter and jam and eaten out of hand.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention is a method of making a specialty bun by taking bagel dough through a special series of steps, most significant of which is a long rising (or proofing) period just prior to baking.

The object of the invention is to have the toasting and jam-carrying convenience of a standard English muffin along with the tastiness and some of the cheekiness of a standard bagel.

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A feature of the invention is the nook-and-cranny texture of the English muffin bagel without the crumbliness of the standard English muffin.

An advantage of the invention is that it provides a sweet sandwich base which is easy to fork-split for toasting, and which is tasty like the standard bagel.

Another advantage is that the muffin of the invention may be eaten like a standard bagel, may be eaten like a standard English muffin, or may be eaten as a sandwich base.

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Other objects, features and advantages will be pointed out and detailed with respect to embodiments prepared along methodology of the English muffin bagel, but it will be clear to those skilled in the art that the forthcoming alterations and other changes in form and detail may be made without departure from the spirit and scope of the invention.

DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is semischematic diagram, a stylized depiction of the English muffin bagel of the invention.

Figure 2 is a comparative chart of preparation methods of standard bagel, and of the English muffin bagel of this invention, along a time base.

10 DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Figure 1 shows semischematically a typical English muffin bagel configuration. (Incidentally, Figure 1 also looks much like a standard bagel, except that it has the inside texture of the English muffin, with nooks and crannies instead of the smooth texture of the standard bagel.) The English muffin bagel 1 is made of recipe ingredients very similar to those of a standard bagel, excepting the cornmeal coating on the crust, but is made by a new method with a special series of steps according to the invention. These steps will be explained under the heading **"PROCESS FOR MAKING ENGLISH MUFFIN BAGELS."**

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The English muffin bagel 1 has the doughnut shape of the standard bagel except that the central hole 2 tends to approach closure and appears much more like a navel. The English muffin bagel 1 also tends to stretch laterally while baking, and may join its neighbor on the baking pan to form a bite mark 3. Nooks and crannies 4 are visible in the bite mark 3. Cornmeal grains 5 are also visible, as is the smooth outer skin schematically shown as number sign 6.

Recipe Ingredients for English Muffin Bagels (Dooley, Editor, Better Homes & Gardens Homemade Bread Cookbook, 1973, page 30)

4 1/3 to 4 1/2 cups all-purpose flour (*We prefer high-gluten flour!*)

2 packages dry yeast

1 1/2 cups warm water (110°F)

3 tablespoons sugar

1¹/₂ tablespoon salt

10 Figure 2 shows recipe process steps for the standard bagel and the English muffin bagel according to this invention. The ingredients for both are mixed (M) and the dough is kneaded (K) until smooth and elastic, then let rest to rise (R) for a quarter hour. Next the dough is shaped into portion-size balls (S). Another quarter hour or so of rising (R) follows. [Standard bagels at this point may be subjected to an optional short surface smoothing step, not shown in Figure 2, by broiling on a greased pan.]

20 The major divergence occurs at this point. Standard bagels are boiled and simmered in water! Figure 2 shows the boiling step as step (H) for H₂O. English muffin bagels are proofed, in a warm long rest and rise proofing step (P) of approximately 3 hours! This long proofing step closely approaches time of maximum rising for the yeast and yeast nutrients present. During this long proofing step, the English muffin bagels rise and spread, to the point where they close the gaps between adjacent buns and develop kiss marks wherever the touch. The holes also close, to resemble navels.

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Divergence continues. The standard bagel is placed on a greased baking sheet and baked at 375°F for a half hour or so until slightly browned. COMMERCIAL PRACTICE FOR THE STANDARD BAGEL IS IN TWO STEPS. THE FIRST STEP, AFTER THE BOILING, IS TO PLACE APPROXIMATELY SIX BAGELS ON A LONG, BURLAP-COVERED WOODEN 2X4 PLANK, AND PUT THEM, BURLAP-COVERED WOODEN 2X4 PLANK AND ALL, ON A DECK IN THE OVEN FOR A CIRCUIT OR TWO, STARTING THE BAKING PROCESS. THE SECOND STEP IS FOR THE BAKER TO FLIP OVER THE PLANK, DROPPING THE PARTIALLY-BAKED STANDARD BAGELS 10 ONTO THE OVEN DECK. The English muffin bagel is misted with water and coated top and bottom with cornmeal--then baked on a medium-hot 375°F lightly greased griddle until cornmeal and SURFACE browning occur, IN COMMERCIAL BAKING, DECK-BAKED. THE ENGLISH MUFFIN BAGEL DOES NOT USE THE BURLAP-COVERED WOODEN 2X4 PLANK; IT HAS NO PARTIAL BAKING. ON ANY BURLAP-COVERED WOODEN 2X4 PLANK.

The standard bagel is typically cut into top/bottom halves for accepting cream cheese.

20 The English muffin bagel is typically fork-split, toasted, and coated with butter and jam.

PROCESS FOR MAKING ENGLISH MUFFIN BAGELS

The method of preparing bagel-recipe ingredients, to form an English muffin bagel, follows this procedure:

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- a) mixing a bagel-dough mix;
 - b) kneading the bagel-dough mix;
 - c) letting the bagel-dough mix rise in a warm environment to form first-rise bagel dough;
 - d) shaping the first-rise bagel dough into individual bun portions;
 - e) letting the bagel-dough individual bun portions rise in a warm environment to form second-rise bagel dough individual bun portions;
 - f) proofing the second-rise bagel dough individual bun portions in a warm environment for a proof time much greater than the sum of rise times in steps c and e, to form English muffin bagel dough individual bun portions, which are then water-misted and coated with thin top and bottom layers of cornmeal; and
 - g) griddle-baking the English muffin bagel dough individual bun portions to form completed English muffin bagels.

We claim: